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ABSTRACT

This monograph provides a contextual statement, overview of the methodology, and copies of instruments and related materials from a study of high school students and their employment in Grand Forks and Fargo, North Dakota. The contextual statement summarizes background information and rationale for the study. In the section on methodology and instrumentation are included the basic survey instrument used for juniors and seniors and the covering information letter, introductory letter and telephone interview instrument used for selected students, introductory letter and interview instrument used for 50% of the teachers in the four schools, introductory letter and interview instruments (one for telephone interviews and another for face-to-face interviews) used for parents of students who participated in the telephone interviews, introductory letter and interview instrument used for employers of high school students, and the form provided to schools for gathering student information from school records. (Data from the study are found in CE 030 964.) (YLB)

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Secondary School Students and Employment

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John Williams
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An Introduction
to the Data

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SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS
AND
EMPLOYMENT

METHODOLOGY AND
INSTRUMENTATION

By:

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University of North Dakota
Grand Forks, North Dakota

October, 1981

FOREWORD

During the summer of 1979, the Bureau of Educational Research and Services provided financial support to assist in the conduct of a study to learn more about high school students and their work outside the school and home. Several people were involved in the planning for the study; several others assisted in the collection of the data before it was subsequently tallied and analyzed.

This monograph represents the second of the reports of that study. Much of the work involved in the planning and conducting of the study came from the ideas and coordination of Vito Perrone, Dean of the Center for Teaching and Learning, University of North Dakota. As well, most of the written narrative is his.

The Bureau of Educational Research and Services is happy to have had some involvement in this piece of work, and is hopeful that this and accompanying monographs in the set will be both informative and helpful to high school administrators, teachers, and students and their parents in the conduct of their high school educational experiences.

Larry L. Smiley, Director
Bureau of Educational Research and Services

Introduction

This monograph, one of several associated with our research on secondary school students and employment, provides a contextual statement, an overview of the methodology, and copies of the instruments and related materials. We have chosen to furnish the foregoing in a separate monograph in order to concentrate solely on the data in our other reports as well as facilitate possible replication.

Context

The vast majority of American young people, ages 15-18, attend and graduate from secondary schools. The graduation rate is close to 80% nationally and 90% in North Dakota. This was not the case a generation ago. Prior to 1950, for example, the majority of young people left school before graduation in order to enter the job market.

Those who wrote about youth in the late 50's and 60's, a time when high school attendance was escalating rapidly, used the term "schooling society" to characterize this new circumstance. Associated with this "schooling society" was the belief that young people were engaged in an "extended adolescence" and lacked the work experience prevalent in earlier times. In the course of the 1970's, there was sufficient concern about the issue of work experience that "career education" became a prominent educational direction and a number of secondary school reform proposals gave significant attention to provisions for students to work in the market-place.

At the risk of oversimplification, the reformist concerns were triggered by a sense that this extended adolescence had fostered

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higher levels of irresponsibility (increased drug and alcohol dependency being manifestations) and contributed to greater unemployment among young people aged 18-24.¹ The literature of reform suggested that young people in school were not being prepared sufficiently for the responsibilities of work and, as a result, could not cope constructively with work related adult life roles. The antidote which filled the reform agendas was to make work an integral part of student's high school education.² By integrating work experience into school programs students would be expected to make a natural transition to the world of work and would not flounder when faced with the need to be independent and personally responsible.

While most schools did not set about consciously to reform their institutions around the issue of work--schools seldom respond quickly and consciously to major national reports, no matter

¹In regard to employment readers might wish to read James O'Brien's "Education is Education, and Work is Work," Teachers College Record, Vol. 81, Fall 1979. O'Brien argues cogently that the high level of unemployment among 18-24 year olds has little to do with schooling, being instead a demographic related condition. He provides data to show that the population entering the labor market for the first time in the 70's, part of the earlier baby boom, exceeded to a great extent the supply of jobs.

²The major reports of the 1970's were: The Reform of Secondary Schools: A Report to the Public and the Profession, prepared by the National Committee for the Reform of Secondary Education (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1973); American Youth in the Mid-70's (National Association of Secondary School Principals: Reston, VA, 1973); Youth: Transition to Adulthood, Report of the Panel on Youth of the President's Advisory Committee (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973); and Giving Youth a Better Chance: Options for Education, Work and Service. Report of the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education, Berkeley, CA, 1979. These reports all stressed the need for job placement programs, credit for work experience, flexible (even alternate day) schedules to accommodate work, etc.

how prestigious the sources--work has become commonplace among high school students.³ This came about in large measure as a result of the demand for student labor on the part of the burgeoning fast food industry. Given the economics of this particular industry, high school students willing to work for minimum wages and without benefits are virtually the only labor force available.⁴

A second contextual strand is the piece which caused us to examine more closely the issues outlined above. While serving with the North Dakota Task Force on Basic Skills during 1977-78, we heard a number of presentations of school administrators and teachers that focused on the "increasing difficulties in sustaining students' interest in school when so many worked extensive numbers of hours." By 1978, this work phenomenon was beginning to filter into their consciousness. While the school people believed that the percentage of students working "might be as high as 50%" and that "many worked as many as 40 hours," no one had any empirically derived information. We chose to examine this issue and its implications, if any, for schools.

³ It is interesting to note that students were entering the world of work in increasing numbers during the 1970's without benefit of school initiatives and almost without notice. While sociologists such as James Coleman (Youth in Transition) and others involved in the major reports cited above bemoaned the fact that "students just didn't work," William Feters collected data from 16,409 high school seniors in 1972 which showed that three/fourths were already working. (A Capsule Description of High School Seniors: Base Year Survey, Washington, D.C.: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Printing Office, 1974.) We believe that this was a typical pattern with which schools did not, and have not, come to terms.

⁴ Employers in this industry made it clear to us in interviews that high school students are, in general, the only persons who apply for their employment vacancies.

Methodology and Instrumentation

We made a decision to focus our research on junior and senior students in the public high schools of Fargo and Grand Forks, North Dakota. Our premise was that these two communities, their basic economic structures and schools, were similar to other urban settings in North Dakota.⁵ In addition, these two communities were easily accessible to us. Given our resources, this was an important factor.⁶

Prior to any instrumentation, we reviewed a number of surveys

⁵ While North Dakota represents our base for this research, our assumption is that our findings in Fargo and Grand Forks are likely to parallel conditions in other small urban settings in the nation. We have had a number of opportunities to discuss our findings with school administrators from many other urban communities throughout the United States. While most have lacked empirical data, they speculated that the data, if collected, would corroborate our findings. Since our research was completed, a number of articles have appeared in the popular press focusing on "The large percentage of high school students working." The following are representative: "Plenty of work is available for Dickinson teenagers," Grand Forks Herald, June 17, 1980, pg. 10A. "Youth Jobless" Myths' Disputed by NBER Findings," The IAPES NEWS, May 1980, pg. 7. "Inflation, Education and the After-School Job," The Wall Street Journal, March 11, 1980. "Send our Children to Work?" Psychology Today, July, 1980, pp. 44-68.

⁶ Our decision to engage in this project was made in February 1979, leaving us very little time to organize the research and secure necessary school district commitments. Rather than take the time to develop a proposal for external funding that might have provided us with some full time staff resources and the like, as well as a start up in January 1980, we chose to begin with considerable volunteer support and commitments from two school districts in which we had a good deal of previous experience with cooperative projects. The State Department of Public Instruction provided us with \$2,000 to assist with the preparation of instruments, duplication activities, mail and telephone communications and travel. The Bureau of Educational Research and Services provided \$2,000 for summer 1979 personnel costs and another \$2,000 came from the Center for Teaching and Learning and was used to pay graduate students for their interviews of teachers, students, parents and employers. Needless to say, this was a low-budget research endeavor.

used by others with high school students in relation to school activities, academic interests, educational aspirations, etc. We met with school officers from Fargo and Grand Forks to discuss information they considered important, for example, teacher's responses to working students and educational aspirations. We also took time discussing with each other issues that we thought were important, for example, student self-ratings of skills, male-female differences and a range of socio-economic relationships. Methodological considerations such as appropriate sample sizes, socio-economic indicators and interview formats were also matters for long discussion.

As instruments were drafted, they were forwarded to school officials for review. They were also piloted with small samples from the relevant populations in order to assure us that the language and formats were understandable.⁷ On the basis of the reviews of school officials, our own careful critiques and the pilot activities, we prepared the final instruments. Some ambiguities remained in the instrumentation but overall, we believe the instruments worked well.

The principals in the four high schools were responsible for

⁷ These pilot activities involved relatively small numbers, all from Grand Forks, and were not representative of the total populations involved. We were working on very short timelines which prevented us from piloting our instruments with carefully drawn representative samples. Nonetheless, we learned from the process, altering our wording in a number of cases, eliminating questions in others. The basic survey was given to 18 students in its draft form; the student interview was given to 6; the teacher interview to 6; and the employer interview to 3.

organizing the administration of the basic survey. In two of the high schools, the surveys were completed in all junior and senior English classes; in another, they were completed in all junior and senior social studies classes; in the fourth, they were administered by school counselors on a special day devoted to career planning. We received usable responses from 2056 students. The total possible population of juniors and seniors was 2240.

The basic survey instrument along with the covering information letter to those administering the instrument follows:

An Informational Statement

School buildings, athletic activities and a large number of students often block an outsider's view of high school life. Because you spend much of your day in school, only you can provide us with the information we seek about school life, individual aspirations and work. The responses you provide in the questionnaire that follows will be held in strictest confidence. You will not be identified with your responses.

The project is being sponsored by the Grand Forks and Fargo Public Schools, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction and the University of North Dakota. Please answer each of the questions as accurately as you can. It will take about twenty minutes to complete the instrument.

Thank you very much for your help! Without you, we could not engage in this research project.

Place an X next to the most appropriate response or write your response where indicated.

1. How many of your close friends have had paying jobs while attending high school?

- (5)
- 1 ——— None of them
 - 2 ——— Only a few of them
 - 3 ——— About half of them
 - 4 ——— Most of them
 - 5 ——— All of them

2. How would (or do) your parents feel about you having a paying job during the school year (outside your home)?

- [6]
- 1 _____ They don't want me to have a job
 - 2 _____ They don't care whether I have a job or not
 - 3 _____ They think it is important for me to have a job
 - 4 _____ They think it is necessary for me to have a job
 - 5 _____ I don't know how they feel

3. How would (or do) you feel about getting (or having) a paying job during the school year (outside your home)?

- [7]
- 1 _____ I don't have a job, and I don't wish to have one
 - 2 _____ I don't have a job, but I would like to have one
 - 3 _____ I have a job, but I would like to work more
 - 4 _____ I have a job, but I would like to work less
 - 5 _____ I have a job, and I am satisfied with the number of hours I am working

The following questions are only for students who have had paying jobs outside their own homes during the past school year. If you are not working or haven't worked during this school year, please go to question #13.

4. How long during the past school year did you have a paying job?

- [8]
- 1 _____ Throughout the whole year
 - 2 _____ About 3/4 of the year
 - 3 _____ About 1/2 of the year
 - 4 _____ About 1/4 of the year
 - 5 _____ A month or less

5. Are you currently employed in a paying job outside your home?

(9) 1 ☐ Yes

2 ☐ No

6. During the past school year, how many hours a week (on the average) did (do) you work?

(10-11) Hours per week (write the number)

7. What type of work have you been doing during the past school year? (Please describe the work briefly in writing)

(12-13) _____

8. How much is (was) your recent wage per hour?

(14-15-16-17) Wage per hour (write the amount)

9. How did you get your job?

1 ☐ Through the North Dakota Job Service

2 ☐ Through friends

(18) 3 ☐ Through school personnel

4 ☐ Through my family

5 ☐ On my own

10. How do you spend or dispose of the money you earn from your job? (Please check the appropriate items(s).)

(19) 1 ☐ Save your money for the future

(20) 2 ☐ Give it to your family

(21) 3 ☐ Spend it on clothing, books or supplies for school

(22) 4 ☐ Spend it on pleasurable activities such as dates, car, etc.

(23) 5 ☐ Other

11. Why do you work (have you worked)? (Please check the appropriate item(s).)

- (24) ☐ My parents told me to get a job
- (25) ☐ I decided on my own to get a job
- (26) ☐ Someone at school suggested that I
get a job
- (27) ☐ I need money for my family
- (28) ☐ I need money for myself
- (29) ☐ I want training for future jobs
- (30) ☐ Other _____

12. Please respond to each of the following statements:

My job helps me to do well in school

- (31) 1 ☐ Strongly agree
- 2 ☐ Agree
- 3 ☐ Disagree
- 4 ☐ Strongly disagree

My job prevents me from doing well in school

- (32) 1 ☐ Strongly agree
- 2 ☐ Agree
- 3 ☐ Disagree
- 4 ☐ Strongly disagree

My job has little relationship to my work in school

- (33) 1 ☐ Strongly agree
- 2 ☐ Agree
- 3 ☐ Disagree
- 4 ☐ Strongly disagree

13. In what school related extracurricular activities were you active during this past year? Check as many as apply to you.

(34) _____ Varsity sports
(35) _____ Band, orchestra
(36) _____ School newspaper, yearbook
(37) _____ Cheerleader, dance line, color guard
(38) _____ Student government
(39) _____ Debate or dramatic clubs
(40) _____ Hobby clubs
(41) _____ Science clubs
(42) _____ Social clubs
(43) _____ Other _____

14. In what non-school related extracurricular activities were you active during this past year? Check as many as apply to you.

(44) _____ Dance
(45) _____ Community music
(46) _____ Community theatre
(47) _____ Ski club
(48) _____ Auto/Motor club
(49) _____ Other _____

15. How often have you attended school related extracurricular activities (sports, dances, drama, etc.) during this past year?

(50) 1 _____ Never
2 _____ About once every 3 months
3 _____ About once every 2 months
4 _____ About once a month
5 _____ Once a week
6 _____ More than once a week

16. How would you rate your skills in mathematics as compared to your classmates.

(51)

1 _____ High
2 _____ Above average
3 _____ Average
4 _____ Below average
5 _____ Poor

17. How would you rate your skills in science as compared to your classmates?

(52)

1 _____ High
2 _____ Above average
3 _____ Average
4 _____ Below average
5 _____ Poor

18. How would you rate your awareness and understanding of social studies issues as compared to your classmates?

(53)

1 _____ High
2 _____ Above average
3 _____ Average
4 _____ Below average
5 _____ Poor

19. How would you rate your skills in oral language (speaking) as compared to your classmates?

(54)

1 _____ High
2 _____ Above average
3 _____ Average
4 _____ Below average
5 _____ Poor

20. How would you rate your skills in reading as compared to your classmates?

(55)

- 1 ____ High
2 ____ Above average
3 ____ Average
4 ____ Below average
5 ____ Poor

21. How would you rate your ability to write as compared to your classmates?

(56)

- 1 ____ High
2 ____ Above average
3 ____ Average
4 ____ Below average
5 ____ Poor

22. What is your father's (or stepfather's) occupation? (Give his job title and what he does at work) _____

(57-58) _____

23. How far in school did your father (stepfather) go?

(59)

- 1 ____ Completed grade school
2 ____ Some high school, but did not graduate
3 ____ Graduated from high school
4 ____ Technical or business school after high school
5 ____ Some college but less than 4 years
6 ____ Graduated from 4 year college or university
7 ____ Attended graduate or professional school
8 ____ Don't know

24. Is your mother (stepmother) employed outside the home?

(60) _____ No

_____ Yes What is your mother's (stepmother's) occupation? (Give her job title and what she does at work) _____

(61-62) _____

25. How far in school did your mother (stepmother) go?

- (63)
- 1 _____ Completed grade school
 - 2 _____ Some high school, but did not graduate
 - 3 _____ Graduated from high school
 - 4 _____ Technical or business school after high school
 - 5 _____ Some college but less than 4 years
 - 6 _____ Graduated from a 4 year college or University
 - 7 _____ Attend graduate or professional school
 - 8 _____ Don't know

26. How good a student does your father (stepfather) want you to be in school?

- (64)
- 1 _____ One of the best students in my class
 - 2 _____ Above the middle of the class
 - 3 _____ In the middle of my class
 - 4 _____ Just enough to get by
 - 5 _____ Don't know

27. How good a student does your mother (stepmother) want you to be in school?

- (65)
- 1 _____ One of the best students in my class
 - 2 _____ Above the middle of the class
 - 3 _____ In the middle of my class
 - 4 _____ Just good enough to get by
 - 5 _____ Don't know

28. How often do you and your parents talk about your school work?

- (66)
- 1 ____ Just about every day
 - 2 ____ Once or twice a week
 - 3 ____ Once or twice a month
 - 4 ____ Never or hardly ever

29. How much education do you believe your father (stepfather) wants you to have?

- (67)
- 1 ____ Doesn't care if I finish high school or not
 - 2 ____ Finish high school
 - 3 ____ Technical, nursing, or business school after high school
 - 4 ____ Some college but less than 4 years
 - 5 ____ Graduated from a 4 year college or university
 - 6 ____ Professional or graduate school
 - 7 ____ Father is not at home
 - 8 ____ Don't know

30. How much education do you believe your mother (stepmother) wants you to have?

- (68)
- 1 ____ Doesn't care if I finish high school or not
 - 2 ____ Finish high school
 - 3 ____ Technical, nursing, or business school after high school
 - 4 ____ Some college but less than 4 years
 - 5 ____ Graduated from a 4 year college or university
 - 6 ____ Professional or graduate school
 - 7 ____ Mother is not at home
 - 8 ____ Don't know

31. How far do you want to go in school?

(69)

- 1 _____ I do not want to finish high school
- 2 _____ I want to finish high school
- 3 _____ I want to go to technical, nursing,
or business school after high school
- 4 _____ Some college training, but less than
4 years
- 5 _____ I want to graduate from a 4 year
college or university
- 6 _____ I want to do professional or grad-
uate work after I finish college

32. Are you planning to go to college (junior or 4 year college or university)?

(70)

- 1 _____ Definitely yes
- 2 _____ Probably yes
- 3 _____ Probably not
- 4 _____ Definitely not

33. On an average school day, how much time do you spend watching TV outside of school?

(71)

- 1 _____ None or almost none
- 2 _____ About 1/2 hour a day
- 3 _____ About 1 hour a day
- 4 _____ About 1-1½ hours a day
- 5 _____ About 2 hours a day
- 6 _____ About 3 hours a day
- 7 _____ 4 or more hours a day

34. If something happened and you had to stop school now, how would you feel?

(72)

- 1 _____ Very happy - I'd like to quit
- 2 _____ I wouldn't care one way or the other
- 3 _____ I would be disappointed
- 4 _____ I'd try hard to continue
- 5 _____ I would do almost anything to stay
in school

35. How good a student do you want to be in school?

- [73]
- 1 _____ One of the best students in my class
 - 2 _____ Above the middle of the class
 - 3 _____ In the middle of my class
 - 4 _____ Just good enough to get by
 - 5 _____ I don't care

36. On an average school day, how much time do you spend studying outside of school?

- [74]
- 1 _____ None or almost none
 - 2 _____ About 1/2 hour a day
 - 3 _____ About 1 hour a day
 - 4 _____ About 1-1½ hours a day
 - 5 _____ About 2 hours a day
 - 6 _____ About 3 hours a day
 - 7 _____ 4 or more hours a day

37. How many hours a day are you in school?

- [75] _____ (Number of hours)

38. On an average school day, how much time do you spend studying in school?

- [76]
- 1 _____ None or almost none
 - 2 _____ About 1/2 hour a day
 - 3 _____ About 1 hour a day
 - 4 _____ About 1-1/2 hours a day
 - 5 _____ About 2 hours a day
 - 6 _____ About 3 or more hours a day

39. About how many days were you absent from school during the past school year?

- [77]
- 1 _____ None
 - 2 _____ 1 or 2 days
 - 3 _____ 3 to 6 days
 - 4 _____ 7 to 15 days
 - 5 _____ 16 or more days

40. During the past school year, did you ever stay away from school just because you didn't want to come?

- (78)
- 1 ☐ No
 - 2 ☐ Yes, for 1 or 2 days
 - 3 ☐ Yes, for 3 to 6 days
 - 4 ☐ Yes, for 7 to 15 days
 - 5 ☐ Yes, for 16 or more days

41. Are you male or female?

- (79)
- ☐ Male
 - ☐ Female

42. How old are you (your age on your last birthday)?

- (5-6) ☐ Give age

43. What grade are you in now?

- (7-8) ☐ Grade

44. Where have you spent most of your life?

- (9)
- 1 ☐ In this city
 - 2 ☐ In this state but outside this city
 - 3 ☐ Outside this state in the United States
 - 4 ☐ In a country other than the United States

45. How many brothers and sisters do you have altogether? (Include all brothers and sisters receiving financial support from your parents).

- (10)
- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 ☐ None | 6 ☐ 5 |
| 2 ☐ 1 | 7 ☐ 6 |
| 3 ☐ 2 | 8 ☐ 7 |
| 4 ☐ 3 | 9 ☐ 8 or more |
| 5 ☐ 4 | |

Thank you very much for your assistance!

To Those Administering the Survey Instrument

1. Please ask everyone to read the cover statement. Assure everyone that their responses will be placed directly on computer tapes for aggregation and that no one will ever be identified by name in the research.

2. Make certain that students complete the identification statement at the end of the survey booklet. These need to be torn off the survey booklet before it is returned to you. Please place the identification forms in the envelope which is provided.

3. If anyone inquires about the numbers on the survey booklets, let them know that they are there in order to assist us in selecting later a sample of students for follow-up interviews as well as to relate some school data (course of study, grade point average, number of credits) to the survey data.

Thank you for your assistance!

Vito Perrone
University of North Dakota

We used in the basic survey instrument a number of open ended items. We will discuss some of them in order to assist readers in understanding our rationale for using them. Rather than providing students with a list of job descriptions from which to select, we asked them to describe what they did (Question 7). We then categorized the jobs for analysis. This, in the end, gave us a broader listing of employment activities than would have been the case had a listing been supplied. A similar rationale was used for having the students describe the work of their mothers and fathers rather than causing confusion by supplying pre-determined categories for them to make a judgment about. We later categorized the occupations of the mothers and fathers according to the basic seven census categories. This was our means of determining socioeconomic background.⁸

To check the reliability of our basic survey data we selected a random sample of students from each of the high schools (ranging from 85 to 96 students) for telephone interviews. Many of the questions on the interview instrument corresponded to those asked on the basic survey. Several additional questions were also posed in order to gain more qualitative information.

In order to prepare the students for the interview, we sent each of them a letter explaining the process. In addition, the interviewers were given a training session which included how to approach the interview, what to say as a matter of introduction to

⁸The census categories are as follows: 1 = Professional, Technical and Kindred Workers, 2 = Managers, Officials and Proprietors, 3 = Clerical, Sales and Kindred Workers, 4 = Craftsmen, Foremen and Kindred Workers, 5 = Operatives and Kindred Workers, 6 = Service Workers, 7 = Laborers. Most of the descriptions provided by students could be easily placed into the census categories. Any uncertainties were submitted to the seven person panel working on this task for group consensus.

the purposes, when to probe, etc.⁹

The introductory letter and interview instrument follows:

⁹The principals cautioned us that the students might not be very receptive to the interview. As it turned out, the students were very responsive. Many called after receiving the letter to inform us when they would be available for interviews. Our interviewers were graduate students in education, law and sociology and faculty in education and anthropology. Almost all of the interviewers had previous experience in conducting field interviews.

The University of North Dakota

GRAND FORKS 58201

CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

May 17, 1979

Dear

As part of our research on school life, individual aspirations and work, we have selected on a random basis a sample of Fargo and Grand Forks high school students to interview. You are among the students in our random sample and we trust that you are willing to participate in a telephone interview that will take no longer than 10 minutes. Please know that your selection has no relationship to the responses you provided on the survey you completed in school. You will, of course, never be identified in the recording or reporting of data. The interview will take place during the period, May 22 - June 1. One of our staff will call you at home during the evening.

Your assistance in this effort is critical and your cooperation will be appreciated. If you have questions, you may wish to call me (777-2674) or discuss them with the principal at the high school which you attend.

Best wishes,

Vito Perrone

VP/ks

STUDENT INTERVIEW

_____ Grade Level _____ School
_____ Male _____ Female

1. Have you had a paying job outside your home during the past school year?

No _____ (Go to question 2)

Yes _____ How much of the year did you work? _____ (Time)

How many hours of work per week did you average? _____ (Hours)

Would you please describe your work? _____

2. Would you have liked a job during the past school year?

No _____ Why is that? _____

Yes _____ Why? _____

3. Do you participate in any extracurricular activities at school (sports, newspaper, debate, clubs)?

No _____ Why? _____

Yes _____ What activities? _____

4. Do you attend school activities on a fairly regular basis (athletic events, dances, plays, concerts)?

No _____ Why not? _____

Yes _____ Why? _____

5. How much schooling do you expect to complete?

High school _____ Vocational School _____

4 year college/ _____ Professional or
university graduate school _____

Don't really know _____

6. a. How good a student do you perceive yourself to be?

One of the best students in my grade _____

Above the middle in my grade _____

In the middle _____

Below the average _____

- b. Could you be a better student than you are?

No _____ Why not? _____

Yes _____ What would that take? _____

7. Which courses have you most enjoyed during your high school years?

Why? _____

8. Which courses have you most disliked during your high school years?

Why? _____

9. Overall, what is your impression of the quality of teaching that occurs at your high school?

Very high _____

High _____

Average _____

Poor _____

Very poor _____

What causes you to make that particular judgment? _____

10. Do you believe that teachers have lowered their expectations of students because so many students are working? (For example, are they assigning less reading, fewer writing assignments, etc.?)

No _____ Should they? _____

Yes _____ In what ways? _____

11. What percentage of students in your grade do you believe work?

% _____

12. Have you ever considered leaving school in order to work full time?

No _____

Yes _____ Why didn't you? _____

13. Do you believe that your high school is preparing you well for post high school life?

No _____ Why not? _____

Yes _____ In what ways? _____

14. What do you think you will be doing 10 years from now? _____

THE QUESTIONS WHICH FOLLOW ARE FOR WORKING STUDENTS ONLY

15. How did you get your job?

Through the North Dakota Job Service _____

Through friends _____

Through school personnel. _____

On my own _____

16. How have your parents felt about you working?

Pleased _____

Not pleased _____

Don't really care _____

17. Has your work helped you to become a more responsible person?

No _____

Yes _____ In what ways? _____

18. Do you enjoy your work?

Yes _____ What do you enjoy about it? _____

No _____ What is the problem? _____

In order to gain a teacher perspective, we interviewed in the schools, on an individual basis, a sample of teachers representing all of the subject fields. The sample represented approximately 50% of all the teachers on the faculties of the four schools. The interview instrument was related to many of the questions we asked students.¹⁰ The interviewers were again provided with a training session to familiarize them with the instrument and the procedures being organized in the schools. The introductory letter to the teachers, along with the interview instrument follow:

¹⁰ In the process of conducting the interviews, we gathered information about the experience level (number of years teaching) of the teachers, the size of the high school they attended, and their subject areas. We speculated that some differences in response might occur in relation to such variables. There were differences in relation to experience--those with the most experience tended to be the least negative about students working--and subject taught--traditional academic teachers tended to be more negative than other teachers. There was not enough variation in the size high school that teachers attended to make any observation about the importance of this variable.

The University of North Dakota

GRAND FORKS 58201

CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

May 16, 1979

Dear

As part of our research on student employment and high school performance, we have selected on a random basis a sample of Fargo and Grand Forks teachers to interview. You are among the teachers in our random sample and we trust that you are willing to participate in an interview that will take no longer than 15 minutes. The interview will take place at your high school during the school day during the week of May 21. In order to facilitate the interview process we have left with your principal an interview time schedule and would appreciate it if you could schedule yourself for one of the interview periods.

Your assistance in this effort, sponsored by the Grand Forks and Fargo Public Schools, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction and the University of North Dakota, is critical and your cooperation will be appreciated. You will, of course, never be identified in the recording or reporting of data. If you have questions, you may wish to call me (777-2674) or discuss them with your principal.

Best wishes,

Vito Perrone

VP/ks

TEACHER INTERVIEW

_____ Subject Area _____ School _____

_____ Number of years of teaching _____ Size of High School Attended?

_____ Grade level of majority of students _____

_____ under 200
 _____ 201-500
 _____ 501-1000
 _____ over 1000

1. a. What percentage of your students do you believe are employed outside their homes?

I _____

- b. Is this percentage higher, lower, or similar to what might have been true a decade ago?

Higher _____ Lower _____ Similar _____

2. How do you feel about students working while they are in school?

Positive _____

Mixed _____

Negative _____

3. Have you ever encouraged a student to apply for or take a job?

Yes _____

About how many? _____

No _____

4. Should the high school assist students in securing employment during the school year?

Yes _____

In what ways? _____

No _____

5. In general, do you believe that students learn to become more responsible as a result of outside employment?

Yes _____

How _____

No _____

Why not? _____

6. Have you ever suggested to individual students that they should work fewer hours or not work at all because of a concern about their academic performance?

Yes _____

About how many? _____

No _____

7. What effects do you believe employment has on students' academic performance in school?
- Positive _____
Mixed _____
Negative _____
8. It has been suggested to us that participation in high school activities - athletics, clubs, arts programs - has declined significantly because so many students are working. What is your sense of this?
- Agree _____
Mixed _____
Disagree _____
9. What would you consider to be a reasonable number of hours per week for a student to work while attending school?
- Number of hours _____
10. Are working students more inclined to take a full range of math, science and foreign language courses than non-working students? Or is there no difference?
- More inclined _____
Less inclined _____
No difference _____
11. Is the attendance of working students better than that of non-working students? Or is there no real difference?
- Working students have better attendance _____
Working students have worse attendance _____
No difference _____
12. Would you say that your working students perform better academically in school than your non-working students? Or is there no real difference?
- Working students perform better _____
Working students perform worse _____
No difference _____
13. Are there ways in which you have altered your expectations of students because of your knowledge of their working schedules? For example, less homework, fewer writing assignments, lower achievement?
- No alteration _____
Yes _____ (Probe fairly extensively)
14. How often do you make use of students' work experiences as a basis for your instructional program?
- Often _____ In what ways?
Sometimes _____
Seldom _____

15. How would you characterize student interest in school activities?

High _____
Moderate _____
Low _____

Why? _____

16. How would you characterize student interest in academic achievement?

High _____
Moderate _____
Low _____

Why? _____

17. How successful do you feel you are in motivating students to a high level of achievement?

High _____
Moderate _____
Low _____

Why? _____

We also desired a parent perspective as a means of corroborating our interviews with students as well as to understand parent concerns about school and work. We drew our parent sample from the sample of students who participated in the telephone interviews. Half of the parent interviews were conducted by telephone and half "face-to-face" in the homes.¹¹ Interviewers were provided a training session to familiarize them with the instrument and prepare them for questions parents might pose. The introductory letter(s) and interview instruments follow:

¹¹ Parents, as was true for the students, were very helpful to us. Only one (of 96) refused to participate in the interview. We should note that mothers were the most active in this process. Fathers tended to suggest "My wife knows more about such things" and deferred to the mother. This was true for the telephone as well as the home interview.

The University of North Dakota

GRAND FORKS 58201

CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

May 17, 1979

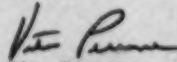
Dear

During the week of May 14th your high school youngster completed a survey related to student employment and high school performance. The survey was part of a research sponsored by the Fargo and Grand Forks Public Schools, the State Department of Public Instruction and the University of North Dakota.

In relation to the research, we have selected on a random basis a sample of parents to interview. You are among the parents in our random sample and we trust that you are willing to participate in a telephone interview that will take no longer than 10 minutes. The interview will take place during the period, June 7 - June 15. One of our staff will call you at home during the evening. Please know that you will not be identified in the recording or reporting of any data.

Your assistance in this effort is critical and your cooperation will be appreciated. If you have questions, you may wish to call me (777-2674) or discuss them with the principal at the high school your youngster attends.

Best wishes,


Vito Perrone

VP/ks

The directions that we provided the home interviewers are included below. A similar guide was made a part of each of our interview training sessions. Given the sensitive nature of the home interviews, however, more time was spent preparing our research staff for the home interviews.

Parent Interview (Telephone)

1. Introduce yourself.
2. Ask - Did you receive our letter about this interview?

Do you have any questions about the purposes of the interview?

This interview is part of a research on student employment, academic performance and participation in school life. It is sponsored by the Grand Forks and Fargo Public Schools, the State Department of Public Instruction and the University of North Dakota. We have surveyed all juniors and seniors in Grand Forks and Fargo, have engaged in a follow-up interview of a sample of the students and have interviewed a sample of teachers in the Grand Forks and Fargo Schools. In addition to interviewing a sample of parents, we will be interviewing a sample of employers.

3. You should know that your responses will be held in strictest confidence. You will never be identified in the recording or reporting of data.
4. Go to interview.
5. Thank the parent for his/her assistance.

School Community _____
Mother _____
Father _____

PARENT INTERVIEW

(FORM A)

1. Has your son/daughter had a paying job outside your home during the past school year?

No _____

Yes _____ (Go to Question 3)

2. Would you have wanted your son/daughter to have had a job during the past school year?

No _____ Why is that? _____

Yes _____ Why? _____

3. Do you approve of him/her having this job?

Yes _____

No _____ Why not? _____

4. Did you or your spouse encourage your son/daughter to get a job?

Yes _____ Why? _____

No _____

5. Did you or your spouse insist that your son/daughter get a job?

Yes _____ Why? _____

No _____

6. How does your son/daughter spend or dispose of the money he/she earns at the job?

_____ Saves it for the future

_____ Gives it to the family

_____ Spends it on clothing, books or supplies
for school

_____ Spends it on pleasurable activities such
as dates, cars, etc.

_____ Other

_____ Don't know

7. Does your son/daughter participate in any extracurricular activities at school (sports, newspaper, debate, clubs)?

No _____ Why? _____

Yes _____ Which ones? _____

8. Does your son/daughter attend school activities on a fairly regular basis (athletic events, dances, plays, concerts)?

No _____ Why not? _____

Yes _____ Why? _____

9. How much schooling do you expect your son/daughter to complete?

High School _____ Vocational School _____

4 year college/
university _____ Professional or
graduate school _____

Don't really know _____

10. How good a student do you believe your son/daughter to be?

One of the best in his/her grade _____

Above the middle in his/her grade _____

In the middle _____

Below the average _____

11. Could he/she be a better student than he/she is?

No _____ Why not? _____

Yes _____ What would it take? _____

12. How often do you or your spouse and your son/daughter discuss his/her school work?

Just about every day _____

Once or twice a week _____

Once or twice a month _____

Never or hardly ever _____

13. In general, do you believe that students learn to become more responsible as a result of outside employment?

No _____ Why not? _____

Yes _____ How? _____

14. Do you believe that teachers have lowered their expectations of students because so many students are working? (Example: are they assigning less reading, fewer writing assignments, etc.?)

No _____ Should they? _____

Yes _____ In what way? _____

15. Do many of your son's daughter's friends have jobs?

Yes _____

No _____

Don't know _____

16. What would you consider to be a reasonable number of hours per week for a high school student to work while attending high school?

Number of hours _____

17. Do you believe that your son's/daughter's high school is preparing him/her well for post high school life?

No _____ Why not? _____

Yes _____ In what way? _____

18. What do you think your son/daughter will be doing 10 years from now? _____

The University of North Dakota

GRAND FORKS 58201

CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

June 5, 1979

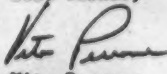
Dear Parents:

During the week of May 14th your high school youngster completed a survey related to student employment and high school performance. The survey was part of a research sponsored by the Fargo and Grand Forks Public Schools, the State Department of Public Instruction and the University of North Dakota.

In relation to the research, we have selected on a random basis a sample of parents to interview either by telephone or in the home. You are among the parents in our random sample to be interviewed at home, and we trust that you are willing to participate. The interview will take approximately 30 minutes and should occur during the period, June 11-June 15. One of our staff will call you at home during the next week to arrange a convenient time for the interview. Please know that you will not be identified in the recording or reporting of any data.

Your assistance in this effort is critical and your cooperation will be appreciated. If you have questions, you may wish to call me (777-2674) or discuss them with the principal at the high school your youngster attends.

Best wishes,


Vito Perrone
Dean

VP:akh

Parent Interview (Home)

1. Make a telephone contact

- a. Introduce yourself
- b. Ask - Did you receive our letter about the interview? Do you have any questions about the purposes of the interview?

This interview is part of a research on student employment, academic performance and participation in school life. It is sponsored by the Grand Forks and Fargo Public Schools, the State Department of Public Instruction and the University of North Dakota. We have surveyed all juniors and seniors in Grand Forks and Fargo, have engaged in a follow-up interview of a sample of the students and have interviewed a sample of teachers in the Grand Forks and Fargo Schools. In addition to interviewing a sample of parents, we will be interviewing a sample of employers.

- c. Is there a convenient time for me to come to your home for a 1/2 hour interview? Arrange precise time and date.

2. When at the home

- a. Introduce yourself again by name and also say something about your school situation.
- b. We are pleased that you are willing to have me here to conduct this interview.
- c. You should know that your responses will be held in strictest confidence. You will never be identified in the recording or reporting of data.
- d. Go to interview.
- e. Thank the parent(s) for assistance.

School Community _____
Mother _____
Father _____
Both _____

PARENT INTERVIEW

(FORM B)

1. Has your son/daughter had a paying job outside your home during the past school year?

No _____

Yes _____ (Go to Question 3)

2. Would you have wanted your son/daughter to have had a job during the past school year?

No _____ Why is that? _____

Yes _____ Why? _____

3. Do you approve of him/her having this job?

Yes _____

No _____ Why not? _____

4. Did you or your spouse encourage your son/daughter to get a job?

Yes _____ Why? _____

No _____

5. Did you or your spouse insist that your son/daughter get a job?

Yes _____ Why? _____

No _____

6. How does your son/daughter spend or dispose of the money he/she earns at the job?

_____ Saves it for the future

_____ Gives it to the family

_____ Spends it on clothing, books or supplies for school

_____ Spends it on pleasurable activities such as dates, cars, etc.

_____ Other

_____ Don't know

7. Does your son/daughter participate in any extracurricular activities at school (sports, newspaper, debate, clubs)?

No _____ Why? _____

Yes _____ Which ones? _____

8. Does your son/daughter attend school activities on a fairly regular basis (athletic events, dances, plays, concerts)?

No _____ Why not? _____

Yes _____ Why? _____

9. How much schooling do you expect your son/daughter to complete?

High School _____ Vocational School _____

4 year college/ university _____ Professional or _____
graduate school

Don't really know _____

10. How good a student do you believe your son/daughter to be?

One of the best in his/her grade _____

Above the middle in his/her grade _____

In the middle _____

Below the average _____

11. Could he/she be a better student than he/she is?

No _____ Why not? _____

Yes _____ What would it take? _____

12. How often do you or your spouse and your son/daughter discuss his/her school work?

Just about every day _____

Once or twice a week _____

Once or twice a month _____

Never or hardly ever _____

13. In general, do you believe that students learn to become more responsible as a result of outside employment?

No _____ Why not? _____

Yes _____ How? _____

14. Do you believe that teachers have lowered their expectations of students because so many students are working? (Example: are they assigning less reading, fewer writing assignments, etc.?)

No _____ Should they? _____

Yes _____ In what way? _____

15. Do many of your son's/daughter's friends have jobs?

Yes _____

No _____

Don't know _____

16. What would you consider to be a reasonable number of hours per week for a high school student to work while attending high school?

Number of hours _____

17. Do you believe that your son's/daughter's high school is preparing him/her well for post high school life?

No _____ Why not? _____

Yes _____ In what way? _____

18. What do you think your son/daughter will be doing 10 years from now? _____

19. Did you ever hold a job while you were attending high school?

Yes _____

No _____

20. Did your spouse ever hold a job while he/she was attending high school?

Yes _____

No _____

21. What is your occupation? (Give job title and what you do at work.) _____

22. What is your spouse's occupation? (Give job title and what he/she does at work.) _____

23. Do you believe the school should provide job placement assistance to help students acquire part-time jobs?

Yes _____ Why? _____

No _____ Why not? _____

24. Overall, what is your impression of the quality of teaching that occurs at your son's/daughter's high school?

Very high _____

High _____

Average _____

Poor _____

Very poor _____

25. Should there be any limit placed on the number of hours high school students are permitted to work?

Yes _____ How many? _____

No _____ Why not? _____

26. Is there anything else you would like to share about students working and going to school?

Our last set of interviews was related to employers of high school students in Grand Forks and Fargo. We developed a list of employers in each community that fit our categories of student employment.¹² We then selected a sample of employers representing each. The total sample numbered 46 employers. As was the case for all of our interviews, the interviewers were provided a training session. The introductory letter and interview instrument related to employers of high school students follow.

¹²Our categories, drawn from student descriptions, were as follows: Restaurant/Fast Food, Sales, Grocery/Supermarket, Custodial, Secretarial/Clerical, Service Stations/Kindred Activity, Building Trades, Health Related and Entertainment.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA

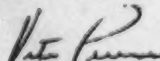
THE CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING
Box 8158, University Station
Grand Forks, North Dakota 58202

We are currently engaged in a research on school life, individual student aspirations and work. The research is sponsored by the Grand Forks and Fargo Public Schools, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction and the University of North Dakota.

To this point in the research, we have surveyed 2100 high school juniors and seniors in Grand Forks and Fargo and have interviewed a sample of their teachers and parents. We are now in the process of collecting school record data on a sample of the 2100 students. To complete our data collection, we wish to interview by telephone a sample of employers of high school students. You are among the sample we have selected and we trust that you are willing to participate. The telephone interview will take no longer than 15 minutes. The interview will take place during the period September 4 through September 7. One of our staff will call during the day. Please know that you and your business enterprise will not be identified in the recording or reporting of any data.

Your assistance in this effort is critical and your cooperation will be appreciated. If you have any questions, you may wish to call me (777-2674) or Mark Sanford, Grand Forks Public Schools (775-3111).

Best wishes,


Vito Perrone
Dean

VP:mkb

Employer Interview (Telephone)

1. Introduce yourself
2. Ask - Did you receive our letter about this interview? Do you have any questions about the purposes of the interview?

This interview is part of a research on student employment, academic performance and participation in school life. It is sponsored by the Grand Forks and Fargo Public Schools, the State Department of Public Instruction and the University of North Dakota. We have surveyed all juniors and seniors in Grand Forks and Fargo, have engaged in a follow-up interview of a sample of the students and have interviewed a sample of teachers in the Grand Forks and Fargo Schools. In addition to interviewing a sample of parents, we will be interviewing a sample of employers.

3. You should know that your responses will be held in strictest confidence. You will never be identified in the recording or reporting of data.
4. Go to interview
5. Thank the Employer for his/her assistance

Employer Interview

1. Type of Employment Setting

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------|------------------------|-------|
| 1. Service Station | _____ | 7. Custodial | _____ |
| 2. Restaurant-Fast Food | _____ | 8. Grocery-Supermarket | _____ |
| 3. Sales | _____ | 9. Theatre | _____ |
| 4. Driving(Delivery) | _____ | 10. Health Related | _____ |
| 5. Secretarial/Clerical | _____ | | |
| 6. Building Trades | _____ | | |

2. Community

- Grand Forks _____
- Fargo _____

3. Character of Employment Setting

- | | | | |
|-------------|-------|--|-------|
| 1. Local | _____ | 4. Number of high school employees (Ask: how many high school employees do you have in a typical month?) | _____ |
| 2. Regional | _____ | | |
| 3. National | _____ | | |

5. Why do you employ high school students? _____

6. Do you use the job information services in the schools to advertise your openings?

_____ Yes

_____ No Why not? _____

7. When interviewing high school students for work in your enterprise, what do you consider to be most important?

☐ Previous employment record
☐ Availability of particular hours
☐ High school attendance record
☐ High school academic performance
☐ Appearance
☐ Other (List) _____

8. Overall, how would you rate the job performance of your high school employees?

☐ Very high ☐ Average
☐ High ☐ Low

9. Overall, how reliable are your high school employees (in terms of honesty, meeting work schedules, etc.)?

☐ Very reliable ☐ Mixed
☐ Reliable ☐ Unreliable

10. What is the rate of turnover among your high school employees?

☐ Very high Why do you believe your turnover rate is high? _____
☐ High _____

☐ Average
☐ Low How do you account for low turnover? _____

11. How many hours per week do you believe high school students should work?

☐ 1-10 ☐ 21-25
☐ 11-15 ☐ 26-30
☐ 16-20 ☐ Over 30

12. Do you place any limits on the number of hours that your high school employees work?

_____ Yes What are the limits? _____

_____ No Why not? _____

13. In general, do you believe that high school students learn to become more responsible as a result of outside employment?

_____ Yes How? _____

_____ No Why not? _____

14. How often do you talk with your high school employees about school related studies?

_____ Almost every day

_____ Once a week

_____ Seldom

_____ Almost never

15. How would you assess the students you employ in terms of their academic skills (reading, writing, language, etc.)

_____ Among the best students in their class

_____ Above average

_____ Average

_____ Below average

_____ Don't know

16. I will now read to you two accounts that involve student employees and reported employer responses. I will follow each by asking you whether you agree with the employer's action.

- a. A high school student was employed at a store for six months and had an excellent work record. One day the student was noticed in the back room studying. He told the employer that he was trying to catch up on some school work. The employer told the student to get back to work and would be released from the job the next time he found studying on the job.

Do you agree with the employer's action? (if no, why not? _____

- b. A high school girl who had been employed for a month asked if she could change her working hours because she wanted to participate in an extra-curricular activity that occurred during the two hour time period she worked. The employer decided to change her hours to accomodate this interest.

Do you agree with the employer's action? (If no, why not?) _____

c. A high school student came to his employer requesting permission to work additional hours per week. The employer asked how he was doing in school. The student indicated that his/her grades had been slipping but felt that the additional work would not affect his/her school performance. The employer assigned the student additional hours as the student requested.

Do you agree with the employer's action? (If no, why not?) _____

d. A student came for a job interview. The individual desired to work the maximum number of hours per week and wanted to work forty hours if possible. When the employer asked the student why he desired the number of hours, he was told that the student wanted to buy a car. The employer tells the student that he will try to accommodate his desires.

Do you agree with the employer's action? (If no, why not?) _____

17. Is there anything else you would like to share about students working and going to school?

Our last data source was school records. We sought information relating to the sample of students developed for the telephone interviews such as absences, type of curricular programs pursued, grades, etc. The form we provided the schools for gathering the data on each individual in the sample follows:¹³

¹³ All of our data was recorded by student number (see the basic survey instrument). The schools matched the number to individual students for the collection of school records data and for supplying us with student names, parent names and telephone numbers. We had no means, however, of matching any number to a specific student. The terms of the Privacy Act were followed throughout.

1. School _____ 2. Ident. No. _____
3. Grade Level Completed May 1979 _____ 4. Cumulative GPA _____
5. ACT/PSAT Scores (If available) _____
6. No. of days absent and tardy

Grade 9 _____ Grade 11 _____

Grade 10 _____ Grade 12 _____

7. Has any disciplinary action been taken?

Yes _____ How many times? _____ No _____

8. Academic Program Taken

Academic _____

General _____

Vocational _____

9. No. of units of math at grade of "C" or better _____

10. Was 2nd year algebra completed? Yes _____ No _____

11. No. of units of science at Grade "C" or better _____

12. Was chemistry completed? Yes _____ No _____

13. No. of units of foreign language _____

14. Total no. of units completed _____

15. No. of English units beyond requirements _____

16. No. of Social Studies units beyond requirements _____

17. Special Awards (List) _____

All of the data collected, with the exception of the open ended responses of teachers, students, parents and employers that were not gathered specifically for categorization (types of work, census descriptions) were placed on computer tape. The SPSS program was used to analyze major portions of the data. The open ended statements not categorized were transcribed for qualitative analysis.

Closing Statement

Our purpose in this monograph was to provide an introduction to our basic methodology and instrumentation. Our data base is very large, most likely too large to attend to adequately. We will, however, in a series of related monographs provide some of the results that we believe to be of interest and helpful in shaping public policy in relation to schools and employment.